

The Baptist Record

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MBC President Gunn sees God's hand more and more

By Tim Nicholas

One of Frank Gunn's greatest blessings is when he takes his assigned time in the prayer room of First Baptist Church, Biloxi, and sees cards noting that others are praying for him as Mississippi Baptist Convention president.

"If there's any one thing that's changed the ministry of our church," says Gunn, pastor of the Gulf Coast church and a first term as MBC president, "it's the prayer room."

Gunn points to an example of God's intervention when people pray. A man at Keesler Air Force Base nearby had a malignant tumor on his lung. He became an object of prayer at the church and doctors removed what they could and then gave treatments. "To their amazement," said Gunn, "he has recovered and there is no trace of the problem now."

But the story continues. Chaplain Tommy Randol (who sang at last year's state convention) is a member of First Church, Biloxi. He visited the man in the hospital and won him to the Lord. He was baptized in the church and is now an active member. Notes Gunn, "A prayer card was placed in the room long before all of this concerning his healing and salvation."

Gunn's traveling experiences may be another example of effective prayer. As of the end of March, he had driven approximately 7,000 miles in connection with his service as convention president. Thus far, he has recorded safe travel and good health. Since beginning the prayer room a while back, "We are seeing God's hand more and more," says Gunn.

Stepping out on faith, according to Gunn, is teaching him and the church more about how God works. For instance, Cooperative Program giving

used to be a dollar amount. Up to that time the church never made its budget, he said. Earl Kelly, executive secretary of the convention board, led a deacon's retreat one year and former convention president James Yates of Yazoo City came the next year, both dealing with missions. "We launched out on faith to add a half percent a year — now we're at 12 percent. The amazing thing is that we've started reaching our budget."

Missions begins at home — the church sponsors a Spanish mission and is sponsor of the Faith Obedience Baptist Church, one of the first black congregations to affiliate with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. And there's Keesler. Though there is a large turnover in membership because of short terms of duty at Keesler, "we are a training ground as our members will leave us and many will go to all parts of the world," said Gunn. "We feel we have a real investment in missionaries when they leave."

A mission Vacation Bible School on the Point of Biloxi last summer has resulted in a weekly backyard Bible study led by a women's Sunday School class. And the church has numerous individuals involved in mission trips each year.

Sandra Gunn, wife of the pastor, has been leading in home prayer meetings preceding the church revival which was in early April. One woman, reported Mrs. Gunn, has told her she wants the Bible studies to continue.

During a workshop concerning spiritual gifts, Frank Gunn noted that his are in administration, as pastor, and in giving. But he chuckles as he recalls a remark by one of the children in the church who par-

ticipated in a five week emphasis called Pastor's Pals. The question was "What did you not understand about the sermon?" The answer was a candid one; "The whole sermon."

Sandra Gunn, who took the same spiritual gifts test, considers herself an encourager of other Christians. "To uphold somebody else when they're hurting," she says. She is also clearly an encourager of Frank Gunn.

A former teacher, Sandra Gunn has worked more recently part time in a card shop. "A year ago Christmas I felt led by the Lord to give it up. Now I see why," she said. She's been free to travel with her husband every trip he's been on so far. "It's given us some quality time together that we don't always get week by week," she said.

Although Gunn is chaplain of the Biloxi Fire Department, he doesn't really have any hobbies. He is a former golfer, and though fish are near he is not a fisherman. He said he feels the work aspect is important. "But he's not a workaholic," added Sandra quickly.

"What free time we have we spend it together," he said, with Sandra adding "We spend as much time as we can with our children." And grandchildren — on March 16 was born BethAnne to daughter Alicia and her husband Jeff Clark who is attending Southwestern Seminary and who this May will graduate and become minister to students at First Church, Hattiesburg. Both sons, Frank and David, will be attending New Orleans Seminary this fall. This brings the entire family within reach of frequent visits.

Sandra places the couple's yearly mountain vacation high on the list of enjoyment. They've been going year-



Sandra and Frank Gunn

ly since 1972 to Highlands, N.C., "for Frank to be away from the phone" said Sandra. "When we get away he relaxes and I sense that." Visiting the little shops, crafts fairs, mountain climbing, and picnicking are all included on their list of pleasures.

Gunn seems to be enjoying his first term as convention president. He acknowledges the contribution made by his predecessor, Charles Pickering of Laurel. "Mississippi Baptists have almost no concept of how much that man did. I know his heart. He gave of himself," said Gunn. "I'm seeing it everywhere I go." Gunn wants to continue Pickering's tradition — and that of other previous convention presidents — as being a leader of uni-

ty rather than a president of controversy.

His major concern is that "we will not allow the controversy to sidetrack us from what we are supposed to be doing . . . A major concern is that we have not approached this problem as a praying people," said Gunn.

"My personal desires are to continue the efforts of unity and cooperation," said Gunn. "We need to attack Satan with a spirit of unity," he added. "I certainly want to work with our convention staff in a supportive role. I want to dream boldly with them for the future . . . I certainly want to be a responsible leader in this position Mississippi Baptists have entrusted to me."

Reagan proclaims May 1 National Day of Prayer

By Eileen Canavan

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Reagan has proclaimed Thursday, May 1, as the 34th consecutive National Day of Prayer.

The observance has been declared annually by each president since Harry Truman in 1952. However, national observances of a day of prayer have been made since 1775, when the Continental Congress first declared one.

Reagan, in his 1986 proclamation, referred to prayer as being "deeply woven into the fabric of our history" by citing three

presidents and their reflections on prayer during times of national crisis.

He cited George Washington's kneeling in prayer at Valley Forge to ask for "divine assistance." Abraham Lincoln, he said, summoned the nation to prayer, saying it was "fit and becoming in all peoples, at all times, to acknowledge and revere the Supreme Government of God . . . and to pray with all fervency and contrition . . ." Reagan referred to Franklin Roosevelt who, after Pearl Harbor, "took courage" from

the thought that "the vast majority of the members of the human race" joined in prayer for victory in "freedom under God."

Reagan's proclamation focused on the individuality and diversity of prayer in the United States.

He described the common core of prayer as "our hopes and aspirations, our sorrows and fears . . . and most especially our love — all turned toward God."

A National Prayer Day Task Force, established through the National Prayer Committee is publicizing the observance. Co-

chaired by Voneta Bright and Herbert E. Ellingwood, the non-governmental committee is asking citizens to take at least five minutes at noon on May 1 for prayer to "thank God for the countless ways he has blessed us and pray for the continued blessing of our nation and its leaders." The task force also is calling for prayer services and gatherings May 1 and the further enactment of state and local observances.

Eileen Canavan is a high school intern with the Washington bureau of Baptist Press.



Editorials by don mcgregor

Senior adults . . . growing

"Grow old along with me," wrote the poet, Robert Browning, in his Rabbi Ben Ezra.

"The best is yet to be," he said. Or, at least, his character, Rabbi Ben Ezra, said that. And he added, "The last of life for which the first was made."

And, indeed, statistics point out that by 1990 one out of every eight persons in the United States will be 65 years of age or older. At the same time this is happening, the population of children and teenagers will fall below 30 percent of the total for the first time in U.S. history.

Work with senior adults is the fastest growing segment of ministry among Southern Baptists. Notable leaders in Southern Baptist ranks who are working with senior adults are Clark Hensley in Mississippi and Horace Kerr with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. Hensley is the part-time consultant in family ministry with the Church Training Department. Mose Dangerfield is the director. Hensley is the retired executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. Kerr, a Mississippian, is the supervisor for the senior adult ministry of the Sunday School Board.

Senior adults will be the focus of attention during Senior Adult Week, which is April 27 to May 4. This is a Church Training emphasis and kicks off senior adult year.

The week will be culminated May 4, which is Senior Adult Day. During the week there will be three senior adult choir festivals. The first will be May 1 at First Church, Grenada. It will begin at 11 a.m. and go until 4 p.m.

The times are the same for all three.

The second will be May 2 at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton; and the third will be May 3 at Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.

There will be three senior adult conferences at Gulfshore, all sponsored by the Church Training Department. The first will be May 12 to 16, the second will be May 19 to 21, and the third will be May 22 to 24. During the second conference the senior adult choir at Parkway Church, the Heavenly Sunlight Singers, will present what Hensley is calling the world premiere of the new senior adult musical, "Meet and Eat (There IS Something More)," on Tuesday evening. The "state" premiere of the musical was March 25 by the choir at Parkway Church. It was written by Ann Colbert of Forest and Irene Martin of the Baptist Record staff. I'm a little proud of it, for I handled the graphic arts for the musical.

Chautauquas for senior adults are the biggest weeks at Glorieta and Ridgecrest, with new weeks having to

be added regularly. They total 10 weeks now. In addition, there will be two special weeks for senior adults at Glorieta in May.

A gigantic, first-ever senior adult convention is planned for April 27 to 29 in Fort Worth next year to wind up senior adult year.

A great deal more will be said about the senior adult convention as time goes by. Material has already arrived promoting it, and it will be used as the dates for which it was designed arrive.

So, here's to the senior adults! They are having the time of their lives now. A week spent with a thousand of them at Ridgecrests last October was a very happy occasion. And I made friendships that are continuing until this time, particularly among members of the Parkway Choir, which presented a musical at the Chautauqua. In fact, the Parkway senior adult choir has now made me a member of the "family."

I'm a little proud of that, too.

Is there anybody out there who cares?

By Don G. Nerren

"Is there anybody out there who cares?" This is a question that is constantly being voiced by many pastors and other staff members of the church today. The conflict between "God's ministers" and the church is an ever growing problem in our world. More and more of those called by God to the ministry are being fired by the church. Some of these firings are indeed called for, but to many they are unjustly done.

These actions are hindering the cause of Christ in our world. Christ gave up his life on Calvary to establish the church, not to bring division. The psalmist, David, a man who was well acquainted with persecutions and rejections, wrote in Psalm 105:15, "Touch not God's anointed, and do his prophets no harm."

It has been said by some that such conflicts between God's ministers and the church is a sign of the end of time. Perhaps this is true, and Jesus is coming back to his earth very soon. Of these things I confess I truly do not know.

However, God's Word is still very clear that it is not God's will for his prophets and his anointed to be touched in such a harmful and hurtful way.

In Mississippi Baptist life alone, some 47 ministers were fired at Christmas time this past year. Most of these ministers had nowhere to go and cried, "Is there anybody out there who cares?"

One of the many sad things about such conflicts is that fellow pastors and associational directors of missions are not standing with those who are hurting. If anyone should stand with a hurting pastor, it is other pastors and associational directors of missions who are in reality the pastor's pastor.

The great need of our day is for other pastors to stand and encourage

their fellow pastors in these times of crisis. Even when the pastor is at fault, other pastors should still reach out to him with love and care and understanding. It seems that we are afraid to even associate ourselves with a fired pastor because we are afraid of being "branded with him" by our own churches.

Now, this is really no new problem. Most of God's prophets and ministers of the Bible were forsaken by their friends. Elijah stood alone on Mt. Carmel against the prophets of Baal. But the Lord stood with him. The apostle Paul said in II Timothy that he had been forsaken by all, even his friends. However, Paul reminds us that even though he was left alone by all to suffer, the Lord stood with him. (II Timothy 4:17) "But all men forsook me," Paul said in the 16th verse. Yet he goes on, "Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." (verse 17a).

There was no one in all of time who was left to stand alone as was our Lord Jesus Christ. When he started talking

about a cross and dying on that cross, they all left him. He came to his own people, and they rejected him and nailed him to the cross. At Calvary on the cross the Lord Jesus died alone, even to the point of being God forsaken.

The conflict between the pastor and the church must end if we are to reach our world for Christ by the turn of this century. The Holy Spirit cannot bless a pastor and church where there is constant conflict going on. Souls cannot be won for Christ's Kingdom in such a tense climate.

So much of these conflicts among God's people could be so easily solved by a few hours on our faces before the Lord God of Heaven. Too often we first act, and then we pray. God's blessings cannot grow in such a climate.

The Bible clearly points out that conflict among God's people is not his will or his doings. God's will cannot be realized in the climate of such constant conflict.

"Is there anybody out there who

cares?" Yes! The Lord is out there just waiting to be invited to help these conflicts. There are many fellow pastors and associational missionaries who really care and who will help.

Oh, may our dear God of Heaven increase harmony among his people. May we join together as never before and sound aloud, "Good News America, God loves you!" Only then, and not until then, will our great God hear from Heaven and come and heal our land. It will take a lot of hard work on the pastor's part as well as the church. Our God is waiting and willing to put the broken vessels back on his potter's wheel and mold them again for service.

"Is there anybody out there who cares?" Thank God there are many. God bless "this many" as they seek to build the Lord's church and work through the conflicts under the leadership and guidance of the blessed Holy Spirit.

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CLRTV dialogs with networks

TUPELO — Executives from ABC, CBS, and NBC met with representatives of Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLRTV) April 1 and 2 in New York City. The purpose of the meetings, according to Billy Melvin, chairman of CLRTV, was to establish a dialogue with the networks and to hear their response to the Statement of Concern drafted by CLRTV earlier this year.

CLRTV is a diverse group of more than 1,600 Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox leaders working together to decrease the amounts

of sex, violence, and profanity in network programming. The Statement of Concern calls on the networks to reduce the levels of sex, violence, and profanity by 35 percent in the 1986 fall season. It also calls for an "immediate end to the anti-Christian stereotyping presented in network programming."

The statement says, "There is a growing concern that television has actually begun to destroy the fabric of society and reduce the quality of life." It pledges its signers to "monitor the situation and to engage in serious dialogue with sponsors to encourage them to join in the reduction of this

moral pollution . . . Should the networks and advertisers refuse to take appropriate steps to stem the tide of filth that is now evident, then we will seek other means of combatting the forces of corruption that are now engulfing us."

CLRTV executive committee members of the New York meetings in addition to Melvin, who is executive director of the National Association of Evangelicals, included Indiana Baptist executive R. V. Haygood; and Executive Director Donald E. Wildmon from the National Federation for Decency.

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FMB elects Texan chairman, votes for blacks' scholarships

By Bob Stanley

DENVER (BP) — By a vote of 38-32, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board elected Robert E. Smith of Weslaco, Texas, as its chairman April 11.

Smith, retired director of missions for the Rio Grande Valley Baptist Association, edged out C. Mark Corts, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. Both are veteran members of the 83-member board, which supervises the work of more than 3,700 missionaries in 106 countries.

It was the closest the board has come to a division resulting from the theological controversy which has gripped the Southern Baptist Convention in recent years. Corts, while a strong supporter of missions and the SBC Cooperative Program, was viewed by some board members as representing fundamental-conservative viewpoints. Smith would be viewed by most as falling within moderate-conservative ranks.

M. W. (Buck) Buckalew, a layman from Falls Church, Va., was elected first vice chairman, 40 to 31, over Howard Baldwin, a multimedia

evangelist from Richmond, Va. The other two officers, Claude Kirkpatrick of Baton Rouge, La., second vice chairman, and Mary Dalton of Asheville, N.C., recording secretary, were elected by acclamation.

Contacted for comment, Corts said the similarity of the votes both for the chairman and the first vice chairman indicated to him that people were voting along "party lines."

"My sense of concern lies not with the results — I can live with that — but with the process which some of the board members evidently employed in injecting politics, accusations, innuendo into the process," Corts said. He added, however, he respects Smith and in no way was trying to implicate him in the process. "I will support him fully," he said.

Gene Triggs, board member from Yazoo City, Miss., said phone calls were made on both sides before the election. "My concern was to elect someone who would work well with Dr. Parks (FMB President) and the board staff in furthering the cause of world missions," he said. "I respect Mark (Corts) and feel he's a valuable

member of the board. But I felt that Bob Smith, because of his service on various committees and more recently as chairman of the board's Administrative Committee, was ideally suited to be promoted to chairman of the board."

At the same meeting, members of the board's Human Resources Committee rejected a bid to appoint graduates of Mid-America Seminary directly without their having to do a year's study at one of the six seminaries sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention.

In a report to the full board, the committee reaffirmed the board's long-standing policy requiring that, for career missionary assignments where a seminary degree is necessary, "the degree must be from an SBC seminary or an accredited seminary plus one year of study (26 semester hours) at an SBC seminary."

Mid-America is located in Memphis, Tenn., and supported directly by that city's 16,000-member Bellevue Baptist Church and other churches which accuse the Southern Baptist seminaries of becoming too liberal in their theology.

Mid-America's faculty includes former Southern Baptist missionaries and places emphasis on missions. Bellevue's pastor, Adrian Rogers, has announced he is willing to be nominated to succeed Charles Stanley as SBC president at the 1986 annual meeting in Atlanta.

Proponents of the plan to appoint Mid-America graduates without further training at an SBC seminary emphasize many of its preachers feel called to missions but face financial obstacles in being required to do an additional year's study at an SBC seminary.

The board's guideline statements, which were in effect before Mid-America was founded, were adopted primarily to deal with candidates from Princeton, Yale, Fuller, Vanderbilt, Dallas Theological Seminary, and others. The board has said that it believes its missionaries, supported by Southern Baptists, need the strong identification with the denomination and its goals which attendance at an SBC seminary helps provide.

At the close of the three-day meeting, the board's outgoing chairman, Harrell R. Cushing of Gadsden, Ala., warned that board members need to unite in developing a "genuine and high level of real and honest-to-goodness trust in each other and staff and in what we're doing."

Cushing said he could remember the day before Southern Baptists became embroiled in the recent theological controversy "when we didn't ask, 'Whose side is this person on?' and I regret that we're asking that question today."

The board voted \$10,000 as "seed" (Continued on page 4)

"Negative designation" considered, rejected

By Dan Martin

A subcommittee of the SBC Peace Committee recommended to the full group that negative designation (or selective support) of Cooperative Program operations should not be implemented to temper the controversy "at this time."

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' unified giving plan. Funds go from churches to state conventions, which retain a portion of the contributions, and send the rest to SBC causes. Currently, only funds which are "undesignated" — used to support all programs of the SBC — are referred to as Cooperative Program funds.

Some persons have suggested a way to end the hostility in the denomination is to allow churches to support only causes they favor and to be allowed to decline to support other agencies with whom they disagree.

The negative designation subcommittee is chaired by Robert Cuttino of Lancaster, S.C. Members are Christine Gregory of Danville, Va.; Ray Roberts of Asheville, N.C.; Albert McClellan of Nashville, Tenn.; and Daniel Vestal of Midland, Texas. During the meeting, Chairman Charles Fuller added Jim Henry of Orlando, Fla., to the group.

Also, in the sixth meeting of the Peace Committee, Fuller announced a prayer retreat, tentatively scheduled for September or October to bring together members of the Peace Committee and "those involved in

denominational life and agency membership."

Despite sharp exchanges between committee members, Fuller said the committee agreed on a process designed to "enlist some people who have either been subjects of the controversy or have been leaders in it as we work toward bringing about some reconciliation."

While the recommendation did not specify who will attend the retreat — expected to be held in one of the Southern Baptist Conference Centers — those participating will include at least leaders of the 11 agencies visited by Peace Committee visitation subcommittees — the six seminaries (Southwestern, Southern, Southeastern, Midwestern, New Orleans, and Golden Gate), the Baptist Sunday School Board, Home and Foreign Mission Boards, Christian Life Commission, and Historical Commission.

Also part of the process will be meetings of the five-member subcommittee on political activity, which will meet, in the next few weeks, with leaders of the groups which have been politically active and with representatives of denominational and independent news media.

Charles Pickering, committee vice chairman and a Laurel, Miss., attorney, said the meetings of the subcommittee will focus on "gaining information and suggestions, conveying concerns of the committee and others and enlisting their support in the

(Continued on page 4)

Convention nominations requested by committee

Persons interested in making a nomination to Mississippi Baptist Convention boards, commissions, and agencies are invited to do so by writing the chairman, Committee on Nominations, in care of the executive secretary's office, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205.

Members of the Committee on Nominations choose nominees for the Convention Board, Education Commission, Historical Commission, Christian Action Commission, trustees of the institutions of the convention, the Board of Ministerial

Education, the Baptist Foundation, and any other group referred to it by the convention.

These nominees are then elected by messengers to the Mississippi Baptist Convention in November.

A nomination form is available from the executive secretary's office which asks for general information on the capabilities and eligibility for the person nominated.

Members of the Committee on Nominations are: Odean Puckett, chairman; Fred Selby; Richard C. Spencer; Billy Ireland; and Mary Ann Cooper.

State ACTS programs are nominated for awards

Mississippi ACTS boards gathered two of the three nominations for cable affiliate of the year in the upcoming ACTS Awards celebration, May 1 in Fort Worth.

The Jackson and Delta (Cleveland) ACTS boards join Pine Bluff, Ark., as the three nominees for the award given by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

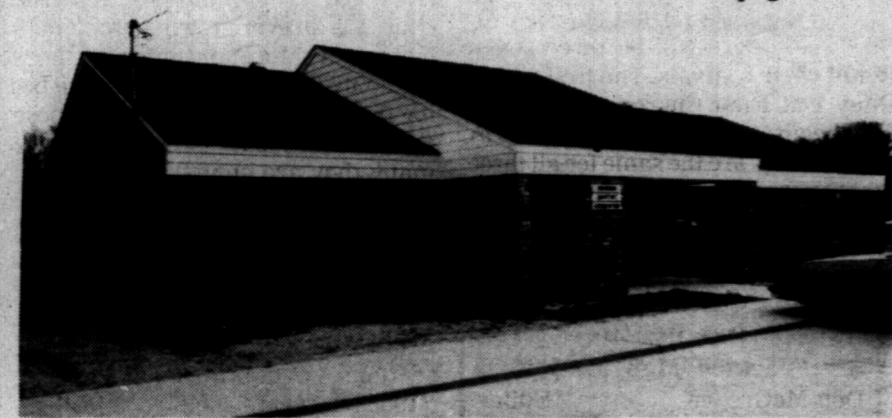
The American Christian Television System (ACTS) is a national television network operated by the Commission, promoting positive Christian values and wholesome programming.

Mississippi programs are among

the finalists for a number of specific awards at this first awards presentation. Jackson's "High School Game of the Week," is a finalist for best human interest program. Ken Anderson of Jackson produced it.

"Revelation with Scott Wesley Brown" is a finalist for best musical program. This is a product of First Church, Jackson. "Alive in '85" is up for best program of the year. And the Delta ACTS board is a nominee for the committee service award.

The presentation will take place at Southwestern Seminary, May 1 at 8 p.m.



O'Neal

Kelly

Hatten

Warren dedicates building

Warren Association held dedication services in Vicksburg for its new building on March 9. The 2,700 sq. ft. building contains three offices, reception area, work room, store room, kitchen, and a large conference area.

On program were Earl Kelly, executive-secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jackson; Norman O'Neal, retired director of missions for Warren Association; and Lavon Hatten, current director of missions.

Others on program were Howard Smith, moderator, Durwood Tadlock, chairman of building committee, and Gerald Martin, president of ministers' conference.

Intensive care



*Drugs are just as deadly
as a loaded gun.
Don't take chances
with your life*

Chaplain Stovall converses with Dr. Burchak

QUESTION: Can one recognize in an alcoholic definite stages that show in a person's body?

ANSWER: Of course the answer is "yes," and a good area of the body to observe is the liver. In the early stages of addiction, the liver cells become infiltrated with fat; this condition is termed "fatty degeneration." This type of liver disease in the early stages is a reversible process. On the other hand, if the period of drinking is extended, the liver cells are scarred forever, regeneration in the cells is not likely, and the condition is referred to as cirrhosis of the liver.

QUESTION: What would you say concerning other evidences of progression in the use of alcohol?

ANSWER: I emphasize the importance of realizing that there are stages mentally, emotionally and physically that occur with usage of drugs and alcohol. If an interested person can recognize the sequence of these stages, then one can get to the addict in a much quicker fashion. I am also thinking of the wear and tear upon the people who surround the particular

individual.

QUESTION: An additional reason for treatment is to spare one's associates from the destructive effects of alcohol, is it not?

ANSWER: I think the importance of professional people who work in the field of addiction is that they can realize the various signs that occur in the early stages. The best time for treatment is in the initial stages. Treatment may have more benefit then than it would have farther down the road of addiction.

The next subject for consideration is "hitting bottom," an often-mentioned term as one thinks of putting an end to drinking and doing drugs.

Note: Joe Stovall is chaplain at the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson. Ed Burchak is medical director of the Chemical Dependency Center at that hospital. Anyone who desires help from the CDC may call 968-1102.

Inquiries should be addressed to Intensive Care, Baptist Record, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

'Negative designation' . . . rejected

(Continued from page 3)

peace effort. This is part of the process the subcommittee must go through before we can make recommendations to the Peace Committee and eventually to the convention."

"It is not easy. If it were, there would be no reason for the Peace Committee to exist. There are major issues before the committee that have not been resolved. We will be working and talking and praying," Pickering added.

Fuller referred to the planned subcommittee meetings and the prayer retreat as "progress." He explained, "We have adopted a strategy designed to utilize some of the people who have been principals in the controversy to become principals in the peace process. That doesn't look like a whole lot of paper, but if it comes to fruition, if it produces what we want it to produce, then we will have made a considerable amount of progress."

A political activities subcommittee is chaired by Pickering. Members are Jodi Chapman of Wichita Falls, Texas; Herschel H. Hobbs of Oklahoma City; Ed Young of Houston; and John Sullivan of Shreveport, La. During the meeting, Fuller added Cecil Sherman of Fort Worth, Texas.

"We spent a great deal of time discussing political organization, voter registration and balloting. There is certain information that we must get, and the subcommittee meetings in the next few weeks are designed to help us do that. We must have the kind of information before we

can make any kind of report to the Peace Committee," Pickering said.

In summarizing the meeting, Fuller said: "The atmosphere of diversity has never left the Peace Committee during the nine months we have been meeting. The problems we have confronted as a convention for the past several years are, by and large, still there.

"We have restated these problems every way we know how and have tried to analyze them, to understand them and to find ways to deal with them. It can become frustrating but we know the Peace Committee came into being to transfer this fray from the denomination at large to 22 people. That is our assignment and we have accepted it."

In addition to approving the recommendation of the negative designation subcommittee and the direction of the political activities group, as well as the prayer retreat, the body also moved toward formalizing its report to the annual meeting of the SBC, June 10-12 in Atlanta.

FMB elects Texan . . .

(Continued from page 3)

money" for an endowment to help provide scholarships for Southern Baptist black students wanting to enter seminary or blacks wanting to do volunteer work overseas. The board hopes black churches and others will contribute to the fund to make it possible for more blacks to participate in foreign missions.

President R. Keith Parks updated members on response to his February report to the board in which he stressed the need for Southern Baptists to be open to any changes that may be necessary in their foreign missions outreach to accomplish Bold Mission Thrust. Parks said he had received about 200 letters from missionaries and 50 to 55 memos from staff offering their suggestions on changes that may be needed.

Two key ideas that have emerged thus far, he said, involve setting up a top-level global evangelization strategy group and providing a special room at the board where visual displays could portray both current world trends and what needs to be done to share the gospel efficiently in view of these realities.

Parks said he hopes to have more specific proposals ready for the board to evaluate at its Ridgecrest, N.C., meeting in late June and then have definite plans ready to present in October.

Bob Stanley writes for the Foreign Mission Board.

Barry, Leafblad will lead May preaching, worship conferences



Barry Leafblad

Jerry Barry and Bruce Leafblad will be conference leaders for a series of sessions on Better Bible Preaching and Worship, May 12, 13, and 14 in three Mississippi cities.

Barry is consultant in the church administration department of the Baptist Sunday School Board and Leafblad is professor at Southwestern Seminary.

The conferences, sponsored by the Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries and Church Music Departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, are designed to aid in

sermon preparation and in improvement of congregational worship services.

Dates and locations include May 12 at West Ellisville Church, Ellisville; May 13 at Colonial Heights Church, Jackson; and May 14 at First Church, Winona. Each will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m. Lunch is included but reservations are requested to be sent to Julius Thompson, director of the Church Administration Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205.

Barry's topics include "What's Happening in Preaching and Worship," "Structuring the Biblical Sermon," and "Legitimate Shortcuts in Sermon Preparation."

Leafblad's topics include "The Mandate for Worship," "The Meaning of Worship," "A Pattern for Worship," and "The Leading of Worship."

Assisting in the program will be Julius Thompson and Dan Hall, directors of sponsoring departments.



**SPEND THE FIRST WEEK
OF JUNE IN
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Db AUDIO SERVICES



Honduran with eye problem: Almost blind, but now he sees

By Tim Nicholas

A short time ago, Mississippian Stanley Stamps, a missionary to Honduras, drove me almost the length of that Middle America country.

I spent a week there primarily to cover the volunteer work going on. On the plane in, five volunteer groups were heading for various mission points in Honduras. With them were two Mississippi groups — one from Leake County and another from Hollandale. Their stories will be in upcoming issues of the **Baptist Record**.

Stanley also took me to several places where the work is thriving and where there have been volunteer groups in the past. Among them is the Baptist church in Tela, on the Caribbean north coast. There I met a man whose eye problem led to his conversion.

On a warm Sunday evening, I met Nepthali Altamirano, a teacher of 26 years experience, and a lay leader of the church.

Nepthali went to downtown Tela looking for a supervisor and bumped into Stanley Stamps who was working with a volunteer medical group from Hurst, Tex.

Nepthali mentioned that he did have an eye problem and the doctor took a look. A diagnosis of glaucoma, a pair of glasses, and Nepthali was already better off. He stayed for a worship service and saw the film in Spanish "Jesus." He made a profession of faith.

The teacher had been reading his Bible for years and had family members who were Christians. That very day a friend had told him he was sorry another friend had died not knowing Jesus as savior. Nepthali told Stanley that he didn't want that to happen to him.

Later, as Nepthali became involved in the Tela church, he was visited by some school officials who had heard that he had built a fine school with \$35 and a great deal of volunteer help.

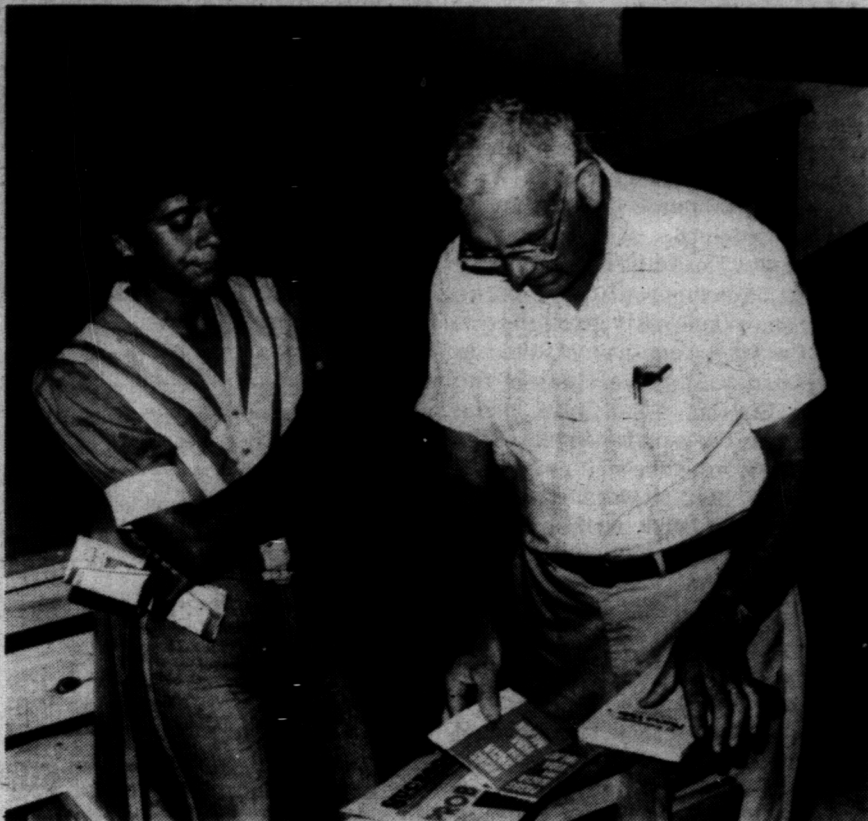
The school officials asked what he yet needed. He told them he needed two more teachers. They complied immediately. This gave Nepthali more time for church work. For now he teaches an adult Sunday School, is church treasurer, is in charge of a Saturday youth program, and conducts a home Bible fellowship on Fridays.

Stanley and Glenna Stamps visit in the neighborhood on weekends along with other leaders of the church. They say it's the fellowship from which they are getting their new believers.

Scottish churches work together

EDINBURGH, Scotland (EP) — Five denominational groups in Scotland have agreed to recognize one another. Members of the participating bodies can take communion with any church involved in the agreement, and ministers will be allowed to celebrate sacraments in any of the participating churches.

Participating denominations include: the Church of Scotland, the Congregational Union, the Methodist Synod, the United Free Church, and the United Reformed Church.



Missionary Stanley Stamps prepares Bible study materials for a young woman who made a profession of faith a few minutes earlier at the Tela church. Her name is Mercedes Rodriguez. She had been brought to a Sunday evening service by a woman who had accepted the Lord during a recent partnership project where a group of Spanish speaking Baptists from the New York area had come to witness.



Missionary Glenna Stamps practices with the youth choir at Tela. Looks like fun.

Thursday, April 24, 1986

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Lay leader Nepthali Altamirano stands at the door of the Tela, Honduras, church while another layman preaches. Preaching is Misael Marriaga, vice president of the Honduras Baptist Convention. By profession, Misael teaches in the teacher college. Whatever it was he said in Spanish held the attention of the congregation for about an hour.

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Faces And Places

by anne washburn mcwilliams

Breakfast on the Ganges

Always, it seems, I'm writing about some place where I ate, and what I ate. Breakfast on the Ganges, to say the least, was different. That's the river the Hindus hold sacred. Last week I read that at one place in India four million were waiting to enter the Ganges for bathing rites when they broke through a barricade and trampled and killed 33 people. I crossed the river, though, on a ferry in Bangladesh, first on a Sunday night and again on Tuesday morning. I didn't see anyone waiting to bathe, but hither and yon I spied the ballooning sails of small fishing boats.

Gloria Thurman, ten-year-old Jamie Young, and I sat in the middle seat of one van. Gloria's teenage son, David, and the Bengali driver rode in front. A Bengali man in the back seat had sort of hitched a ride. I got out to look around a bit. Peering at the bright colored trucks that towered around us on the ferry, and at the men lined up at the railings, I stumbled on rough planks, fell against a rope, and got grease on my skirt.

After I stepped back into the van we ate breakfast. We poured coffee from the thermos Guinevere Young had prepared before we left her house at Magura at 5 that morning. She and James were in another van; we were enroute to Baptist mission meeting in Dhaka. Before we embarked, Jamie had bought fried bread from a little shop on the river bank. Now I was really hungry, and glad to get a bite of it. (It tasted like the flapjacks I make of flour and water.) Then a young fellow appeared, peddling popped rice. Jamie and David haggled with him a bit about the price, which they thought too high. I accepted Jamie's offer to try that, too, but found it too peppery for me.

"I go to Dhaka from Gopalganj at least three times a month," Gloria told me. As language orientation coordinator, she helps new missionaries who are studying the Bengali language.

Along the way that morning we had driven past rice fields and sugarcane fields, and mustard fields ablaze with yellow blossoms. We'd seen oxen plowing, women working on the road, and men in a stream catching fish with their hands. Our first bit of trouble came when we got to the first ferry, on a smaller river. Trucks were backed up a long way because the one at the river bank had a broken axle and the driver had said "Allah wills it," and accepted his fate with no further ado. James persuaded him (in his truck) to be pushed onto the ferry.

The road to Dhaka was just as bumpy Tuesday as it had been Sunday. Pretty soon the van ahead of us had a flat tire. Sib, the Bengali driver, and David fixed it quickly. "Since Lotie Moon offerings bought these vans, I hate for us to subject them to these roads," James said. "But it took much more time to travel by public bus or steamer than by the vans." Personally, I think the wear and tear on missionaries' bones is more important to consider than wear and tear on the vans.

Next day I ate lunch at a modern

hotel in Dhaka — the Sonargaon, all glass and marble and fountains — with Tom and Gloria Thurman and Jerry and Pansy Rankin. Asian leaders from five countries were holding a summit meeting that week and the VIPs were staying at that hotel. Consequently, our pocketbooks got X-rayed on the way in and out.

"You've got to experience Old Dhaka," Tom told me. "It will be hard to describe." How right he was! That's where we got into a kingsized traffic jam, along with a vanload of missionaries' wives. It was a jam of rickshaws and carts, of pedestrians and baby taxis. Like Tom said, how can I describe it?

Car horns beeped. Rickshaw bells jingled. Perfume from a garbage truck mingled with odors from a perfume shop. A man rode by in a rickshaw, holding two pieces of pipe across his lap; they stuck out into the traffic on each side of him. Old men pulled at their white beards. Old buses leaned with their loads. A yellow truck loaded with jute sported a picture of the Taj Mahal on one door. Two women rode by in a rickshaw, dressed like twins, in long beige cloaks. Behind them rode another woman in a red-flowered silk sari. Two boys on the sidewalk sold orange drinks and

7-Ups. A man was gathering wood from a pile beside a shop. Book stalls . . . Fresh oranges for sale . . .

And then we made the mistake of turning into the street of rice warehouses. That's where we got in the jam. Policemen at the opposite corner were fruitlessly struggling to clear the way. Rice was stacked in burlap bags along the sides of the streets. Similar bags were being stacked onto carts in the middle of the street. Dust from the rice drifted all around us. Men walked down the street, trays of brick on their heads. Bags were falling off one cart, and two men in undershirts and lungis were trying to push them back on. One caught a few grains of rice that fell through a hole in a sack, looked about, and popped them into his mouth.

A woman with a short straw broom followed a truck, sweeping up the grains of rice that fell behind it, sweeping them up with the dirt mixed in, collecting them, no doubt, for her supper.

Somehow I don't mind the absence of chocolate bars in my Weight Watchers diet, when I think of those little grains of rice mixed with sand. Why do I keep hearing Jesus' words: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat?"



On the road from Magura to Dhaka, James Young, missionary, watches as Sib, Bengali Christian driver, and David Thurman, MK, repair a flat tire.



Of 18 missionaries in Bangladesh, eight are from Mississippi — the Biens, the Buckleys, the Thurmans, and the Youngs. Pictured above, during a mission meeting at the Guest House in Dhaka, are left to right, Patt and Glenn Bien, Gloria and Tom Thurman, Jerry Rankin, and Guinevere and James Young, with (front row), Jerry Rankin and Guinevere Young's mothers, Pansy Rankin and Mildred Jenkins. Rankin is associate director, SBC foreign mission work in southeast Asia. Fran and R. T. Buckley were on furlough.



Bill Hancock, pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., presents a check to Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks (right). The \$50,000 represents profits generated by sales of the book, "Death to Life — Bangladesh," written by missionary Jim McKinley and published in 1978 by Hancock's church. It chronicles the McKinley family's experience during the death of East Pakistan and birth of Bangladesh. The money is to be used to build a meeting place and training center for Baptists in Bangladesh. Bill Wakefield, the board's area director for South and Southeast Asia, is in the background. (FMB) PHOTO By Stanley Leary

Book profits go to Bangladesh

Death to Life: Bangladesh was written by the missionary, Jim McKinley, and published in 1978 by the Highview Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky. It is the story of the McKinley family's experiences during the death of East Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh.

Recently a check for \$50,000 was presented to the Foreign Mission Board from the Highview Church, as profits on the book. These profits are to be used for building of an auditorium at Immanuel Baptist Church in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

"Certainly we as Baptists do not have a good place to meet in this city of over 4,000,000 people," McKinley said. "But we will have." Funds from his book are building the auditorium. Construction is underway.

"Near the end of last year," reports McKinley, "a publisher of a bi-monthly magazine translated and published most of *Death to Life: Bangladesh* in his magazine. No permission was taken for this. Then on Feb. 21, Language Martyr's Day (a day designed to honor students who

(Continued on page 8)

Book Reviews

THE TEMPLE OF DIVINE TRUTH, by Mark Lowry; Carlton Press, Inc., New York, New York; hardcover; 72 pages; \$6.95.

The author, a native of Sabougla, Miss., and a former pastor in Mississippi, goes all the way through the Bible in this little book. The book is said to present "a number of vital biblical passages and their interpretation, meaning, and significance in their historical context as well as in their relevance to contemporary life and religious thought." The author says that his purpose in writing the book was to give "a concise understanding of what the Bible really means to the child of God."

The book has 16 chapters. They are Creation, Genesis One; In His Image, Genesis One and Two; The Garden of Eden—Paradise, Genesis 2:8-17 Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, Genesis 2:23; Enter the Serpent, Genesis 3; The Promise, Genesis 3:15-21; The Cherubim and the Flaming Sword, Genesis 3:22-24; The Destruction of Jerusalem, Psalm 122; His Star in the East; The Message of Life; The Supreme Sacrifice, Gethsemane and the Cross; The House of the Living Stones, God's Church; John's Portrait of His Master; The Final Judgment; The New Jerusalem: Heaven; and How People Respond to God's Program for Them.—DTM.

IF YOU LOVE ME . . . by Billie Hanks Jr. (Word, 33 pp., paper) "If you love me, keep my commandments." These are the words of Jesus. Following through on this thought, the author, Billie Hanks, explains keys to

spiritual growth for new Christians and for church members who want to grow spiritually. He tells Christians how to grow in their love for God and how to learn to listen to God. He talks about five kinds of prayer. He gives help in the areas too of Bible study, spiritual journal-keeping, and taking notes of sermons and Bible studies. Intermingled with these are experiences from his own life. Hanks is a lecturer in the film series of the same title, *If You Love Me*. He is an evangelist who has dedicated much of his 41 years to teaching and writing about discipleship and the layman. He is president of the International Evangelism Association and was formerly a minister-at-large for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. —AWM

Fame is what you have taken,
Character's what you give;
When to this truth you waken,
Then you begin to live. — Bayard Taylor

THE TEMPLE OF DIVINE TRUTH
by Mark Lowry, 8505 Antioch Rd.
Hopkinsville, KY 42240, 72 pp.
\$8.00 postpaid

It is logical to assume that every child of God desires a concise knowledge of what the Bible really means to him. The Temple refers to God's people, whom HE loves supremely. Have difficulty reading? Book also available on cassettes plus cassette with 31 of author's poems. Write for prices.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved until all circumstances and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record.

Armstrong cult

Editor:

It was interesting, to say the least, to read the March 20 issue which contained an unsigned letter expressing shock and concern over the attitude that Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God may be cultic in their teachings. The letter was supposedly written by a "Southern Baptist." This in itself would have shocked me several years ago but since I have been in the ministry I have encountered more than a few Southern Baptists who see no wrongs with the Armstrongs.

With no offense intended to the author of the afore mentioned letter, let me suggest that he or she speak to the Director of Missions so that he, along with the Associational Missions Committee, can schedule an Interfaith Witness Conference for the local association. These conferences are extremely beneficial, and I am positive that Rev. Hollis Bryant, consultant to the Mississippi Baptist Cooperative Missions Department, would only be too glad to work with those who are interested. Be sure and explain that you would like for the Worldwide Church of God, to be one of the focal study groups.

Having attended an IWC, I have a much clearer idea of why the Worldwide Church of God is considered to be cultic as well as gaining a better understanding of how to share your faith in Christ to those within their organization. When one looks at the doctrines of the WCOG side by side with those of Christianity, (Baptists in particular) it is not difficult to see that Armstrong and his successor and their followers represent a clear cut departure from traditional biblical belief.

Let me make clear the fact that in no way are we to hate or despise the members of the WCOG. It is only through the love of Christ which is shed abroad in our hearts that we can point out their breach with traditional, biblical Christianity and then witness to them about our Lord and Savior. Without love, the battle may be won but the war will be lost.

Cary F. Worthington
New Albany

On segregation

Editor:

We are writing in regard to the letter to editor published in the March 6 issue of the Baptist Record in which the writer favored racial segregation.

In the March 13 issue you wrote a responsive column in which you disagreed with the March 6 letter and in detail refuted that integration was bad.

You refer to Ethiopia in your response, and we agree that there is little integration there, but your statement showed your shallow knowledge of the situation confronting the starving masses there.

Ethiopia is a Communist-controlled country, and the massive medical and food donations from the free world are

not reaching the needy because the socialist government has control of the distribution, and recent reports of the United States government bemoan the fact that tons of donated grains and supplies are being allowed to ruin and not distributed by the government.

Enclosed is a copy of the booklet, "A Christian View On Segregation," authored by Rev. G. T. Gillespie, President Emeritus of Belhaven College in Jackson, in which he stands in defense of the principle of segregation.

The undersigned Mississippi Baptists support these principles, and as you note in the column that a great amount of space will be given to refutation, we hope that you extend this same courtesy to those who support the principles of our forefathers.

George Allday
Gore Springs

This is a letter signed by 50 persons. We are running it with the first signature only because it does not take multiple names to get letters printed. We will, however, have all 50 names on file. Normally we would not

run a Mimeographed letter, as this one has to be since it had so many signatures; but this was the only choice we had if we were to run it. And we didn't want to deny the writer his viewpoint.

Some facts of the editorial must be noted, however. First, the editorial had no comment on why conditions in Ethiopia are so bad. It simply said that they could not be blamed on integration. And a more careful reading of the editorial would note that, concerning space to be used for concepts, it said, "there will not be a great amount of space given to a refutation."

For the record, the piece written by G. T. Gillespie was made public on Nov. 4, 1954. — Editor

New B W circle

Editor:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast!

We would like to let you know that Griffin Street Baptist Church has just organized a new Baptist Women's Circle, and we have named it after our pastor's wife. She is Dorothy McNeil,

and she is the wife of Rev. Athens McNeil.

We think that she is the ideal pastor's wife and church worker. She has a wonderful personality and is dedicated to missions. She is always willing and able to minister anywhere the church needs her.

She is the mother of two children, a son, Thom McNeil, who lives in Austin, Texas, and a daughter, Peggy Feinberg, who lives in Escatawpa and is the mother of her three grandchildren. She is loved by both young and old.

Johnnie Aultman, Secretary
Griffin Street Church
Moss Point

Divorced minister

Editor:

I am writing to let you know I enjoy reading the Baptist Record very much. It has some good things in it. But one thing last week got to me, and it was the letter about the divorced minister. I think this man should be allowed to preach and have his own church. This man did not want a divorce. It was his wife. Why should

he be blamed for something he didn't want. It says in the Bible, if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. She was the one that wanted to leave the Christian. God has called you to live in peace. I'm not saying she is not a Christian. She just wasn't happy living the life she had. I feel for him. If the people that are Christians turn him away from a church then who can he turn to. God has called him to preach his Word.

Name withheld by request

Poland prints for Czechs

NEW YORK, NY (ABS) — Fifty thousand New Testaments in Czech are to be printed in Poland and shipped over the border for churchgoers in Czechoslovakia, the American Bible Society announces.

The New Testaments will be distributed by the Czechoslovak Ecumenical Council, a group formed 17 years ago from among the country's Protestant churches, which has been given permission to import them.

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In addition to a listing of the host churches, here are the other mission conferences to be held:

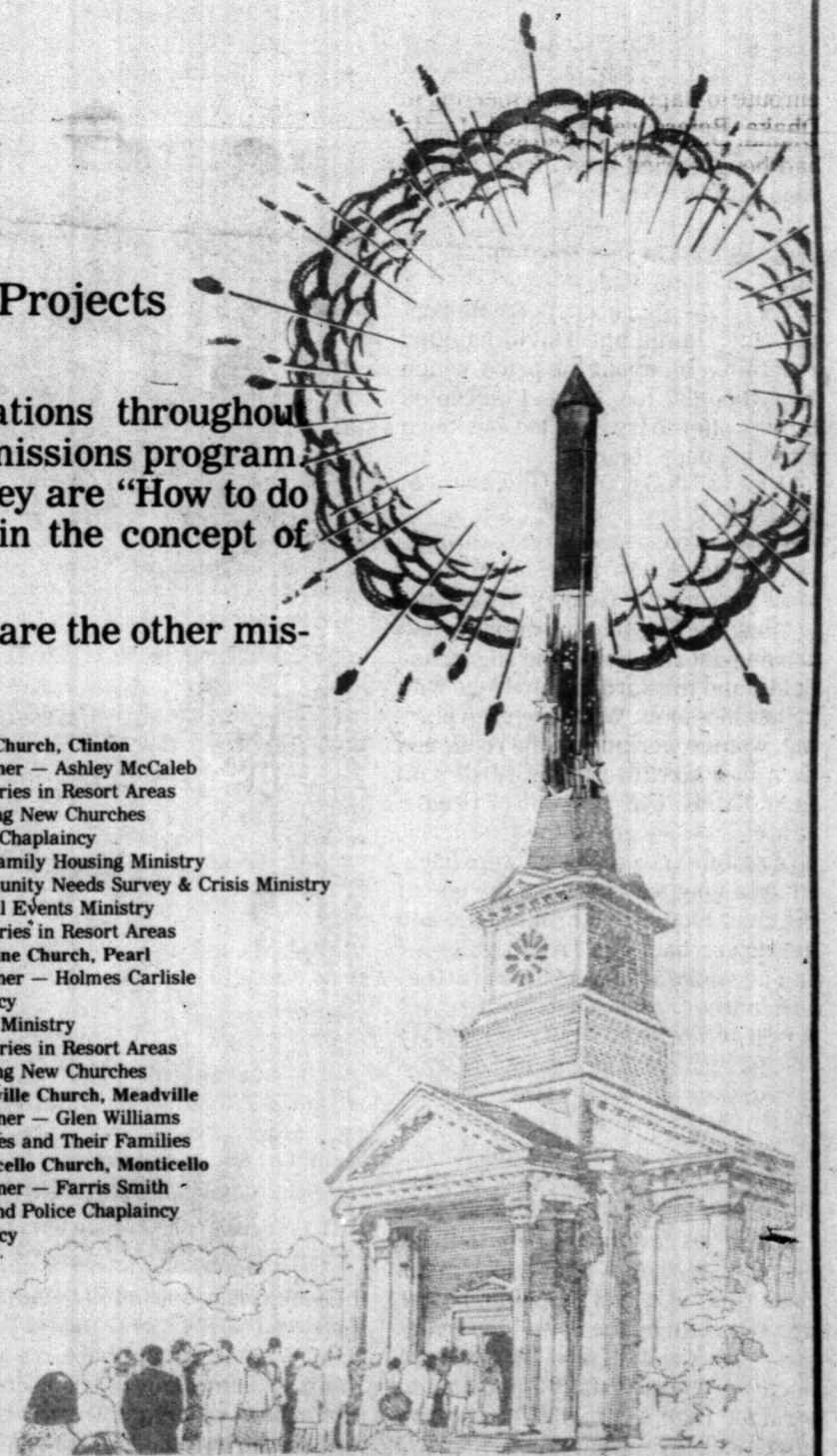
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Inmates and their families
Literacy
Fire and Police Chaplaincy
Community Needs Survey
Ministry to Deaf
Main Street Church, Hattiesburg
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Jail and Police Chaplaincy
Starting New Churches
First Church, Newton
Convener — Lynn Mackey
Literacy
Crisis Ministry
Ministry to Deaf
First Church, Louisville
Convener — Hollis Bryant
Jail and Police Chaplaincy
First Church, Starkville
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First Church, Calhoun City
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First Church, Booneville
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First Church, Senatobia
Convener — Richard Alford
Ministry to Deaf
Community Needs Survey & Crisis Ministry
First Church, Cleveland
Convener — Milton Burd
Ministry to Deaf
First Church, Greenwood
Convener — Marjean Patterson
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First Church, Clinton
Convener — Ashley McCaleb
Ministries in Resort Areas
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Motel Chaplaincy
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Devotional Intimacy with God

By Dean Register

In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck tells about his experience of prayer. He said, "Miss Watson took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it warn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It warn't any good without hooks. I tried for hooks three or four times, but somehow I couldn't make it work . . . I sat down one time in the woods and had a long think about it. I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuff-box that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, I says to myself, there ain't nothing in it."



Huck thought prayer was getting whatever we want when in reality prayer is discovering what we need through intimacy with God. We never know God deeply unless we pray frequently.

Intimacy with God cannot be achieved quickly. It takes time. Jesus spent days and nights conversing with the Father. He would often get away from the noise of the crowd to be alone in prayer. He said, "Man ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). The word "ought" suggests a moral imperative and the word "faint" implies a spiritual and emotional weariness. We need to pray because intimacy with God is so necessary and the temptation to give up is so alluring.

Jesus taught the disciples that to be much for God they had to be much with God. When prayer becomes our urgent need then divine intimacy becomes our crucial desire.

Essentially prayer is based on a relationship. We don't converse freely with someone we don't know. We bare our souls and disclose our hidden secrets only to someone we trust.

Intimacy with God through prayer requires a surrendered life given to him without reserve or regret.

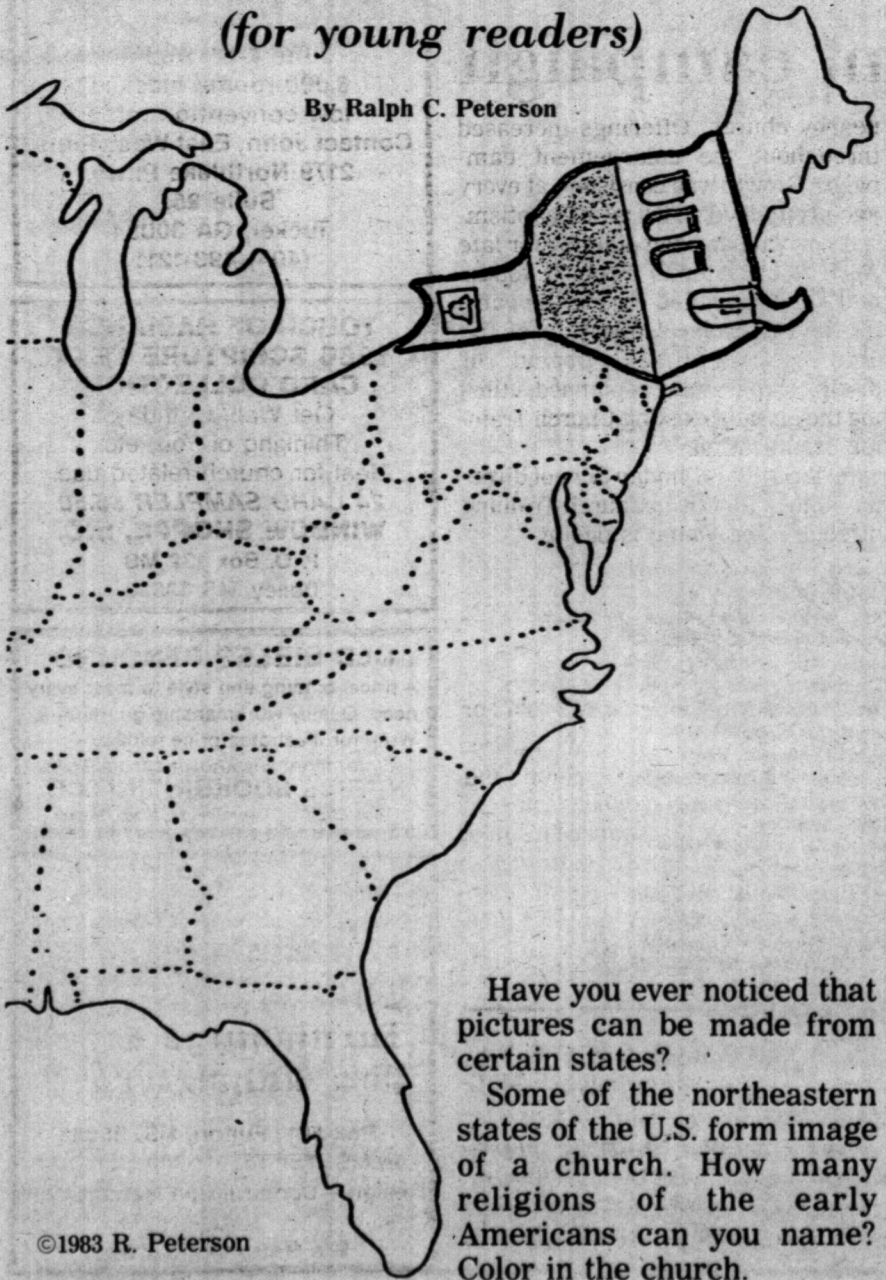
Dean Register is pastor, First, Gulfport.

GEOGRAFUN:

Nations and Imaginations

(for young readers)

By Ralph C. Peterson



Have you ever noticed that pictures can be made from certain states?

Some of the northeastern states of the U.S. form image of a church. How many religions of the early Americans can you name? Color in the church.

©1983 R. Peterson



Med Center BSU sponsors bike-a-thon

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center's Student Union is sponsoring a bike-a-thon/walk-a-thon on Saturday, April 26, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. to raise money for missions. For details contact Kathy Bearden, MBMC's BSU director, at 968-5144. Pictured from left are BSU students who are coordinating the event: Laura Bennett, Lisa Cottrell, Laura Tullos, and Melissa Bates.

400 persons in Canton give away 5,000 Bibles

The Canton Ministerial Association sponsored a Bible distribution program that placed 5,000 marked New Testaments in the hands of its citizens.

About 400 persons participated in the project, according to association president Louis Smith, pastor of First Church, Canton. "This ran across denominational and racial lines," said Smith.

The distribution was done on Palm Sunday, with a note placed in each testament inviting the recipients to attend the church of their choice, listing

the participating churches.

A training session had been held two weeks earlier at First church, where team assignments were made and a city utility list was used.

Participants were commissioned at the courthouse square before the distribution. "The response was overwhelmingly positive," said Smith.

Though the distribution ran within city limits, one deacon noted that he knew a lot of people on his road (out of town) who could use Bibles. He ordered 50 himself to distribute later.

Names in the News

Mrs. Sarah Merritt, 75, of 1560 Lowery Lane, Jackson, died April 8, 1986, in Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. Services were held at Wright & Ferguson Funeral Home. She is survived by her son, Gus Merritt, pastor of Clarke Venable Church, Decatur; daughters, Mrs. Norma Temple of Jackson and Mrs. Carol Morgan of Star; two sisters; two brothers; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Anne Washburn McWilliams, assistant editor of the Baptist Record, won a first place award from the Mississippi Press Women for writing. The win was in the personal column category. Mrs. McWilliams won for her Faces and Places column last June, about her dog, entitled "My Best Friend."

Donald P. Hustad, professor of organ at Southern Seminary in Louisville, will be the guest of First Church, Vicksburg, May 3 and 4. He will lead the sanctuary choir in a choral workshop on Saturday. On Sunday he will participate in the morning worship service and on Sunday night there will be a concert of sacred organ and choral music.

Harold Kitchings, executive secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, was elected president of



Kitchings

the Association of Baptist Foundation Executives for 1986-87. There are 25 state foundations in addition to the national Southern Baptist Foundation.



Barber

Mrs. Betty Barber, supervisor of the Mississippi College nursery school since 1973, will be honored with a reception on Saturday, April 26, from 2-3:30 p.m. in the Cockcroft Hall Building on the Clinton campus.

Mrs. Barber, who has directed the programs of the laboratory school and taught on a part-time basis in the area of early childhood development for the past thirteen years, will be leaving the position at the end of the current academic year.

Center Ridge group to sing at Parchman

A group of members at Center Ridge Church, Yazoo City, has formed a musical entertainment group called Bethel Experience. The group chose its name from Genesis 28:16 to 19.

Five of the six members of the group are members of Center Ridge Church. The other, Jeffrey Potter, is a deacon at Satartia Church.

The five at Center Ridge are James Blackburn, the lead singer; Terry Blackburn, soprano; Ric Posey, bass; Monna Cameron, alto; and Frances Cameron, pianist. Potter sings baritone and plays electric bass.

James Blackburn is an agriculture pilot, and Potter works for Mississippi Chemical. Monna Cameron and Terry Blackburn work for the Yazoo Herald, and Frances Cameron is assistant manager of a department store.

The group will present three concerts at Parchman on April 27. The members travel throughout the state as they are invited, a spokesman said. The address is P.O. Box 164, Holly Bluff, Miss. 39088 or 746-8844.

Book profits go to Bangladesh

(Continued from page 7)

gave their lives for their language when Pakistan was trying to force another language on them in 1951) on that day, *Death to Life: Bangladesh* was sold everywhere by the Bengali Academy, in the Bengali language. Again no permission was taken. But, though I wrote it, Bangladeshi people have taken it as their own."

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Revivals:



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First, Clinton: April 27-30; Carl Bates, native Mississippian and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, evangelist; Joel Duncan, minister of music, First, Huntsville, Ala., music; Sunday, regular times, 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 6:50 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; continental breakfast will be served each morning preceding and following the worship time; Bill Baker, pastor.

Walker Hill (Rankin): Apr. 27-30; Rickey Kennedy, evangelist; John Yates, music; Bernard Nail, pastor; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.

First, Water Valley: April 27-30; Sunday, 10:55 a.m., 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 12 noon, lunch served, and 7:30 p.m.; Frank Crumpler, Home Mission Board, Atlanta, evangelist; Fred Kelly, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, Tenn., music; Guy Reedy, pastor.

Liberty (Mississippi): April 27-30; 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily; Ron "Butch" Kirkland, dean of Clarke College, evangelist; Ronnie La Caze, music director, Goodrum, Vicksburg, music; Steve Pettey, pastor.

Thorn Hill, Rt. 2, Pelahatchie: April 27-May 2; weekday services, 7:30 p.m.; Guy Gray, pastor, Thorn Hill, evangelist; music director, Donnie Stuart.

Mount Moriah (Marshall): April 27-30; Kenneth McMillen, First,

Byhalia, evangelist; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30; Millard L. Swinney, pastor.

Wayside, Scobey: Apr. 27-30; Paul Blanchard, Leland, evangelist; Sun., 11 a.m., and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:30 a.m., and 7:30 p.m.; Sat., Apr. 26, fish fry; David Norris, pastor.

Eastside, 3464 Patterson Drive, Pearl: April 27-May 2; Ted J. Witten, evangelist; Tom Cline, music; services, 7 each evening; Howard Benton, pastor.

Paul Truitt Memorial, Pearl: Apr. 27-30; 7 p.m.; David Poe, evangelist; Dennis Basden, music director, Jimmie C. Wood, pastor.

First Church of Runnelstown, Hattiesburg: April 27-May 2; Richard Miley, evangelist; Sunday services, Sunday school, 10 a.m., worship service, 11 a.m., dinner and afternoon service immediately following; no night service, Sunday; Mon.-Fri., 7:30 p.m.; W. C. Rainey, music; Danny L. Chaney, pastor.

North Greenwood, Greenwood: April 27-30; Sunday, 11 a.m., and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 12 noon (lunch served), and 7 p.m.; Bert Breland, pastor, North Greenwood, preaching; Hugh Plunkett, Trinity, Carthage, music.

Braxton, Braxton: April 25-27; 7:00 p.m. and regular time, Sunday morning; R. C. Rice, deacon, Star Church, guest speaker; Charles Guy, pastor.

Morrison Heights, Clinton: April 27-30; Sunday services, 8:30 a.m., 11 a.m., and 7 p.m.; weekday services; 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Perry Neal, fulltime evangelist, Montgomery, Ala., evangelist; Alan Celoria, fulltime evangelist, Smithdale, music evangelist.

Briar Hill, Florence: April 27 - May 1; Milton Scott, Keokia, Ill., evangelist; Gene Hubbard, music; Wilson Winstead, pastor; Sunday, regular scheduled times; week-day services, 10:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m.

Pittsboro (Calhoun): April 27-30; 7:30 nightly; Malcolm Pinion, evangelist; Garneith Rounsaville, music evangelist; Barry Ward, pastor.

Hamilton (Monroe County): April 27-30; 7 each evening; joint area tent crusade sponsored by Bartahatchie, Hamilton and Center Hill; pastors from each church will be preaching each evening with Danny Berry, pastor of Calvary Church in Denham Springs, La., preaching the closing message on Wed.; special guest features will be Curt Garrett, football coach at Hamilton on Sunday night; Mon. night, ensemble from IJC; Tues., Rocky Felker, head football coach at Mississippi State; Wed. ensemble from IJC with special emphasis on youth and a giant hotdog supper; Julian Thompson is the pastor of Bartahatchie, George Blakney at Hamilton and Don Nerren at Center Hill. The big tent will be located on Hwy 45 in Hamilton.

William Carey to form School of Education

The William Carey College School of Education will be formed on June 1, from the current departments of education, psychology, and physical education. Walter Butler will be dean of this school, while Beth Burchell will head the new department of curriculum and instruction and coordinator for NCATE accreditation procedures.

Other administrative changes will also be taking place this summer for the college. Milton Wheeler has been appointed as vice president of student development and professor of history

and social science. He is dean of the college of arts and sciences.

J. V. McCrory, academic vice president, will remain in that position and will also handle duties as dean of the college of arts and sciences. This will provide for a closer consolidation of all schools and departments under one dean.

James Downey, dean of continuing education, is returning, at his request, to a full-time professorship in the school of music and as humanities professor in the college of arts and sciences.

Ministers' wives' luncheon to focus on fitness, service

ATLANTA (BP) — "Ministers' Wives: Alive-Fit-Serving" will be the theme for the 1986 Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives Luncheon in Atlanta Tuesday, June 10.

The luncheon, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, will begin at 12:15 p.m. in the Omni International Hotel in downtown Atlanta.

Ministers' wives will focus on physical and spiritual fitness during the luncheon, said Betty Dilday, president of the SBC Conference of Ministers' Wives and wife of Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth.

Keynote speaker will be Millie Cooper of Dallas, who co-wrote "Aerobics for Women" with her husband, Kenneth, acclaimed by some observers as the founder of the aerobics movement.

The luncheon also will feature a "fitness style show" as an interpretation of the program theme.

Tickets for the luncheon will be \$15 if purchased during the convention in Atlanta. Tickets are available in advance for \$13.50 and should be ordered from Joy Rust, 324 White Falls Drive, Columbia, SC 29120. A self-addressed, stamped envelope must be enclosed.



Secretaries' officers

The new officers of the Mississippi Baptist Secretaries' Association are shown above. Left to right, they are Tinie Slade, Bayou View Church, Gulfport, secretary-treasurer; Betty Anne Bailey, Baptist Record, second vice-president; Nancee Ratliff, First Church, Tupelo, first vice-president; and Lillian Carte, First Church, Long Beach, president.



Program personalities

Program personalities for the Mississippi Baptist Secretaries' Conference were, left to right, Lillian Carte, First Church, Long Beach; Nancee Ratliff, First Church, Tupelo; Guy Henderson, director Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Department; Virginia Fulton, First Church, Grenada; Don McGregor, editor, the Baptist Record; Debbie Norris, Mississippi College; and Lucy Hoskins, consultant (retired) church Administration Department, Nashville.

Parks grows in response to enlargement campaign

Parks Church, Tallahatchie County, serving a large rural area around Drew, Parchman Penitentiary, and Glendora, reports the successful completion of a three-month Sunday School growth campaign, climaxed by a five-week attendance emphasis.

Enrollment increased from 40 to 97. Average attendance increased from 30 to 66. Highest attendance was 83. One new class began as a result of the campaign.

A van was bought and began transporting residents of the Parchman free-world community to the

nearby church. Offerings increased throughout the enlargement campaign. Growth was consistent at every age-group level. Two await baptism.

A revival has been planned for late April to minister to unsaved youths and adults enrolled during the campaign. Under the leadership of the church council, a period of discipleship training is planned, utilizing the already existing Church-Training organization.

W. T. Smith is Sunday School director; Chuck Morris is Church Training director; Joe Young is pastor.

Staff Changes

Michael Memorial Church, Gulf Coast, has called Craig Conner from Dothan, Ala., as pastor.

J. A. McCain has resigned Holly Grove Church, Florence, where he pastored for seven and one-half years. He is available for supply, interim, or pastorate. He may be reached at 534

Richmond Dr., Florence, MS 39073 or call 845-7076.

Wesley Enfinger has accepted the call as pastor of Antioch Church, Neshoba County. He preached his first sermon as pastor on April 6. Enfinger, his wife, Pam, and their two daughters moved from Hebron Ridge Church in Clarke County.

Revival Results

Pleasant Grove (Wayne): April 6-9; Dicky McAllister, preaching; Jimmy Knight, song leader; six additions by letter and one profession of faith; Charles Gordon, pastor.

Woolmarket, Biloxi: number of public decisions; Carey Miller,

Miami, Fla., evangelist; W. C. Rainey, Hattiesburg, music evangelist; M. L. Faler, pastor.

Cliff Temple, Natchez: March 31-April 3; Jerry Swimmer, evangelist; 19 professions of faith, 7 by letter and a number of rededications; W. G. Dowdy, pastor.

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Just for the Record



Easthaven Church, Brookhaven, recently awarded Sword-Drill Bibles to Elementary III members (8 years old) for completing recitation of all 66 books of the Bible. Ben-don Ginn is pastor.

Members of the class are pictured, left to right, Kevin Lewis, Kendra Taylor, Paige Richardson, Dara Callender, Heather Morris, Tom Buford, and Jeremy Orr. Back row, Justin Smith, Darion Delaughter, Justin Chance, Marc Ginn, Randy Laird, Jr., Ryan Day. Mrs. Fred Baker is director, and Miss Betty Baker and Mrs. Betty Allred are teachers.



The RAs and GAs of Arrowood Church, Meridian, teamed up for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The project was The Arrowood Post Office — Lottie Moon Branch. The RAs built the main post office while the GAs decorated mail boxes for the Sunday School classrooms. Church members mailed Christmas cards and letters through the post office and money was raised from love gifts. The project raised \$273.45.

Pictured (left to right) are Janice Mooney, GA leader, Greg Brown, RA assistant leader, Summer West, Jennifer Mooney, Amanda Mooney, Kimberly Gentry, Robert Baker, Johnny Wood, and Donald Gentry, RA leader.

Campus ministers to focus on understanding God's call

ATLANTA (BP) — "The Hope of Our Call" will be the theme for the annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers June 8-9 at Wieuca Road Baptist Church in Atlanta.

Campus ministers from schools across the United States will focus on understanding God's direction in their

lives, said Frank Cofer, president of the organization and director of Baptist student ministries for the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association.

That examination of God's vocational calling will be facilitated by two "cluster group" sessions, Cofer said. In the first, participants will be grouped by the length of their tenure in campus ministry to share how they have arrived at their calling.

In the second, they will divide into small groups to study practical elements of campus ministry, ranging from administration to Bible study approaches.

Resource leaders primarily will be drawn from within the group, he added, noting contributions of colleagues are designed to enhance the spirit of collegiality within the group.

In addition, two speakers from outside the organization will address the meeting. Bill Clemmons, professor of spiritual formation at Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., will help participants assess their call to campus ministry. Peter Rhea Jones, pastor of First Church, Decatur, Ga., will lead in "celebrating a call to ministry."

Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, will dedicate its new multi-purpose facility on Terry Road at Sycamore Drive (Brookleigh Subdivision), April 27, at 2:30 p.m. This completes phase one of a four-phase building program and provides a worship capacity of 160. Gary Knapp, pastor.

The Brotherhood of Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, recently put a new roof on the educational building and a roof on the home of Mrs. John (Connie) Sherman. M. L. Faler is pastor.

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, has been showing the "Hooked On Life" film series during April, at the 7 p.m. worship services. M. L. Faler is pastor.

Calvary Church, Belmont recently observed Youth Sunday. The youth were in charge of all of the services. The highlight of the day was the special speaker, Jack Robertson of Huntsville, Ala., a gospel humorist. There were 22 public commitments, states Marc Howard, pastor.

The 13th annual homecoming for Puckett Cemetery Association will be held April 27, at Puckett Church, Puckett, with J. C. Cole as guest speaker. An offering will be taken for the upkeep of the cemeteries, states Mrs. Gay Searcy. Dinner on the ground will be served.

Steinway piano given to MC

A new nine-foot Steinway Concert Grand piano was formally presented to Mississippi College during a special concert April 23.

The piano, delivered earlier this spring direct from the New York manufacturer, is being donated to the college by Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Lofton of Brookhaven. The Loftons are both graduates of Mississippi College as are their four children.

They are donating the piano in honor of Laurie Lofton Davidson's piano teacher, Ralph Taylor, professor of music and a member of the Department of Music faculty since 1956. Mrs. Davidson, a resident of Clinton, received her bachelor of music education degree from Mississippi College in 1982 and was Miss Mississippi College.

Performing the initial concert on the piano was Stephen Taylor of Clinton, a graduate music major and current student of Ralph Taylor.

Homecomings

Crowder, Crowder: 12th annual homecoming; April 27; 11 a.m.; Truman Scarborough, former pastor, now serving at East Philadelphia, Philadelphia, message; Wayne Baggett, former minister of music, now serving at First, Quitman, and his wife, Peggy, special music; lunch served following service.

Enon, (Panola): homecoming, May 4; lunch served followed by an afternoon of singing; Russell Scruggs, guest speaker; James Clutter, pastor.



Grace Church dedicated

Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, was the featured speaker during dedication services of the new Grace Church, Philadelphia. The building is 142 by 48 feet and contains a temporary sanctuary which will seat about 200 persons. There is space for about 150 in Sunday School. Plans are for two more units. More Sunday School space will be needed as well as a permanent sanctuary. Dennis Duvall is the pastor.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Apr. 27- | Senior Adult Week (CT Emphasis) |
| May 4 | College Concern Conference; N. Oxford BC, Oxford; 6:30-9:00 p.m. (SS) |
| Apr. 28 | College Concern Conference; FBC, Starkville; 6:30-9:00 p.m. (SS) |
| Apr. 29 | Senior Adult Choir Festival; FBC, Grenada; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT/CM) |
| May 1 | College Concern Conference; Main Street BC, Hattiesburg; 6:30-9:00 p.m. (SS) |
| | Mississippi Baptist Medical Dental Fellowship; FBC, Jackson; 6:15-9:00 p.m. (BRO) |
| May 2 | Senior Adult Choir Festival; Morrison Hgts. BC, Clinton; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT/CM) |
| May 3 | Senior Adult Choir Festival; Petal-Harvey BC, Petal; 11 a.m.-4 p.m. (CT/CM) |
| | Crusader Day-South-Grades 1-6; Central Hills Retreat; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (BRO) |
| | Youth Selection Tournament & Youth Speakers Tournament; Alta Woods BC, Jackson; 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (CT) |
| | Mission Action Workshops; 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; FBC, Gulfport/FBC, Newton/FBC, Louisville/FBC, Starkville/FBC, Clinton/FBC, Calhoun City/FBC, Booneville/FBC, Senatobia/FBC, Cleveland/FBC, Greenwood/FBC, Brandon/FBC, Meadville/Monticello BC, Monticello/Main Street BC, Hattiesburg/Calvary BC, Tupelo (WMU/BRO/CoMi/SS) |

Ole Miss BSU plans Rebel Roundup

Rebel Roundup is a day of crazy games, fun, food, and inspiration sponsored by the Ole Miss Baptist Student Union especially for high school and junior high church groups.

It will be held Saturday, April 26, from 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., in Oxford, at the University of Mississippi Education School Playing Field.

Additional information may be obtained by calling (601) 234-9366.

Graham crusade to open in D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Billy Graham's Greater Washington Crusade, his first crusade in the nation's capital in 26 years, begins April 27, and will continue for seven evenings at the Washington Convention Center, with a closing service May 4 at R.F.K. Stadium in Washington, D.C.

Standing Pine, observes 100th

Standing Pine Church, Leake Co., will observe its centennial celebration on May 4. The program will begin at 10:30, lunch will be served at 12 noon, and an afternoon service at 1:30. Charles Pickering will be guest speaker. Randolph Scott is pastor.

Elam, Yalobusha, celebrates 125th

Elam Church, Yalobusha Association, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on May 25. A picnic lunch will be served at 12 noon with congregational singing and fellowship in the afternoon.

The American people never carry an umbrella. They prepare to walk in eternal sunshine. — Alfred E. Smith

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

March 13 - March 26, 1986

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a listing of Gifts and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopeful designed to further honor, with taste and respect those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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March 27 - April 10

April 11 - April 21

ATTENTION

Pastors and Sunday School Directors

**MOTHER'S DAY
OFFERING ENVELOPES**

**Will be in the mail in a few days
WATCH FOR THEM!**

Baptist Record

- Uniform: *The Holy Spirit and Jesus' mission*
- Bible Book: *Repentance and correction of a sin*
- Life and Work: *Developing Christian character*

The Holy Spirit and Jesus' mission

By Gus Merritt
Luke 3:15-22; 4:16-30

Although John performed no miracles nor was of the Davidic line, his preaching was with such authority that the people began to wonder if he were the promised Messiah. John's answer to their inquiry is a statement of the contrast between his water baptism and the baptism of Jesus in the Holy Spirit and fire. John's baptism with water was a baptism based upon repentance.

The word translated "with" literally means "in, into, within." John baptized in water but Jesus' mission is to baptize in the Holy Spirit and fire. The baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire indicates power and judgment since fire was used symbolically to represent judgment. This covers the entirety of Jesus' ministry. He will reach many for the kingdom but many will reject

him and suffer the judgment of God's wrath (Luke 3:15-17).

Jesus came to John to be baptized along with other people who were presenting themselves for baptism. Many people were coming to be baptized because they had repented of sin and were committing themselves to live exemplary lives. Jesus came to be baptized in order to show his commitment to his ministry of redemption. Jesus had no need to repent. Jesus' baptism was a commitment to the death, burial, and resurrection. This is what baptism represents (cf. Rom. 6). His commitment and baptism launched him into his public ministry. Because of his public commitment, the Holy Spirit descended upon him to empower him for this ministry. The voice from heaven was God's anointing him for this ministry. The Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove

is significant.

Out of all the creatures in God's creation, he chose the lamb and the dove as symbols of his redemptive purpose. These two creatures represent gentleness and humility. The Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus at his baptism was not the incarnation as the Corinthian Gnostics taught. Jesus was just as much God before the Holy Spirit descended upon him as he was after the Holy Spirit came upon him. The Holy Spirit came to empower Jesus for his ministry. At the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Trinity is present; Father (the voice from heaven), Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism to empower him for service lets us know that when we commit ourselves to Christ for salvation and service, the Holy Spirit enters

us to empower us for service. The more we yield ourselves to the control (filling) of the Holy Spirit, the more service we render for Christ. Just as the Trinity was present at Jesus' baptism, so the Trinity is present in our own conversion experience. The Holy Spirit enters the believer at conversion and salvation. The believer receives ALL the Holy Spirit upon accepting Christ. Therefore, the question is not how much of the Holy Spirit the believer has, but how much of the believer does the Holy Spirit control.

Luke 4:16-19 not only teaches us the scope and meaning of Jesus' ministry, but it teaches us something of Jesus' early life and training. Jesus was brought up from early childhood to attend the synagogue (4:16). It is important to begin training the child to worship so that when he or she grows up, he or she will continue the practice.

There were two lessons on the Sabbath in the synagogue. The first lesson was the reading of small portions of the law by some seven people. The se-

cond lesson was the reading from the prophets. Jesus read and made comments on the second lesson. The scroll of Isaiah was handed to him and he stood to read as was the custom, and sat down to teach. The portion read, was Isaiah 61:1-2 and some words from Isaiah 58:6. Jesus taught that he is the fulfillment of that prophecy.

Jesus' understanding of his ministry for which he was anointed, is to proclaim the good news to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim deliverance to prisoners of war (literally what "captives" means), recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are broken apart (bruised) spiritually and emotionally, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19). This was read at the beginning of the Jewish jubilee, a very appropriate time. Jesus' ministry is primarily to heal and not to hurt!

Gus Merritt is pastor, Clarke Venable, Decatur.

Repentance of a serious sin

By Billy McKay
Ezra 9:1-10:44

Introduction. In Ezra 1-6 we saw the return to Jerusalem of Zerubbabel with about 50,000 exiles to rebuild the temple. In Ezra 7-10 we have the return of Ezra with about 20,000 people. Ezra leads in a reformation. This reformation is in response to the word of God. The theme of Ezra is the word of God. There are ten direct references — 1:1; 3:2; 6:14, 18; 7:6, 10, 14; 9:4; 10:3, 5.

Repentance and correction of a serious sin is our subject in this lesson. We often need repentance and correction of sin in our own lives. To do this there must be the following:

I. The defining of the problem.

A. The report to Ezra (9:1-2). The sad condition of the people is reported to Ezra. God's chosen people had intermarried with the surrounding

heathen and enemies of God. This led to immorality and idolatry. Three groups are mentioned. 1. The people of Israel (9:1a). 2. The priests and Levites (9:1b) who were the religious leaders. 3. The princes and rulers (9:2) who were the civil leaders.

B. The response of Ezra (9:3). Ezra becomes very emotionally involved in an effort to bring about a reformation among the people of God. He fasts and even plucks off the hair of his head and beard.

C. The reaction of the people (9:4). The people begin to join Ezra in mourning. The word of God has begun its powerful work. Hebrews 4:12 says that the word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. This explains why the people "trembled" in 9:4.

II. The delivering of the prayer (9:5-15). Ezra recognizes the prin-

ciples of God's grace (9:8) and mercy (9:9) and therefore prays for repentance and correction of a serious sin. We often do not know the word of God and the promises of God well enough to know how we should pray. Here Ezra prays with the knowledge of God's word concerning God's great grace and mercy. Ezra called a spade a spade in that he not only confesses the sins of the nation but he also confesses his own sins. Not the use of the first personal pronoun plural "we" and "our" (9:6,7). Nehemiah and Daniel did the same thing (cf. Neh. 9:33, 34, 37; Dan. 9:4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 20).

III. The deciding of the people (10:1-44). In 10:3 we have the tenth and final reference to the word of God which is the theme of Ezra. The psalmist says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the

testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (cf. Prov. 19:7). Ezra, the great biblical scholar (cf. Ezra 7:6, 11) and teacher of the law of God (cf. Neh. 8), commanded the Israelites to separate themselves from the people of the land and from their strange wives. It is possible that this measure is based on the law permitting divorce found in Deut. 24:1-4. Jesus' teaching on the grounds for divorce and remarriage in Matt. 19:3-9 is based on Deut. 24:1-4.

The decision of the Israelites to head the word of God through his spokesman, Ezra, involved three things.

A. It involved a confession (10:2a). The people confessed they had trespassed against the Lord in taking the strange wives. This was forbidden in Ex. 34:11-16 and Deut. 7:1-4 (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-16). The Hebrew word for "strange" (neker) is the same word for the "strange" woman mentioned in Prov. 6:24; 23:27 and 27:13. This "strange woman" in Proverbs is an

adulterous woman. Could this suggest that adultery was the basis for Ezra's command in 10:11.

B. It involved a certainty (10:2b). A "hope in Israel" was mentioned. One of the great words in the Bible is the word "hope." Hope is listed alongside love in I Cor. 13:13. The word "hope" really meant certainty. Jesus never mentioned his death without mentioning his resurrection. Confession brings forgiveness and hope.

C. It involved a covenant (10:3). We are not to play act with God. According to 10:16, the people kept their covenant they had made with the Lord.

Conclusion. The message of the book of Ezra is now complete. Two things have been accomplished. Proper temple worship accurately presents a prophetic picture of the Messiah's atonement (chaps. 1-6), and the people are living in obedience to God's word (chaps. 7-10). Both are a result of the grace and mercy of God.

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Developing Christian character

By Peter McLeod
Colossians 3:12-17

When Charles Colson confessed his faith in Jesus Christ, a newspaper editor who could not forget Colson's role as President Nixon's "hatchet man," dipped his pen in acid and wrote, "Colson may be washed in the blood of the Lamb, but he has 'ring around the collar.'" It was difficult for the editor to believe that radical, lasting change could occur in the lifestyle and mindset of a man like Colson. Many in our society share that belief. Some are willing to concede that personality adjustment can take place through psychoanalysis or counseling, but they have difficulty accepting radical change.

Paul, in Col. 3:1-11, has described the change in the Colossians who have "been raised in Christ" (v. 1). That radical change is ultimately expressed in a new quality of life in Christ which means there is "neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (v.

11). In verses 12-17, he describes how this change is "fleshed out" in the lives of believers, both individually and collectively.

A. Christian character defined (vs. 12-15)

In this passage Paul lists the "nitty-gritty" qualities which should be evident in the human relationships of convinced Christians — compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Then he caps the list with the two qualities which make all the others possible — forgiveness (v. 13) and love (v. 14).

Forgiveness is what Christianity is all about. A distinguished Boston pastor was literally hounded to death by a woman in his congregation. No matter what he said or did, she was critical. Finally, the Lord delivered both when she moved to the West. As time passed, however, the woman became convicted about her behavior and wrote asking the pastor for forgiveness. He sent an immediate return wire with these words, "Forgiven! Forgotten! Forever!" Both

were healed and freed by their Christ-like attitude of forgiveness.

Christian character is molded in forgiveness and it is solidified by the binding power of love (v. 14) and the end result is peace (v. 15).

B. Christian character described (v. 16)

The Living Bible translates this verse, "Remember what Christ taught and let his words enrich your lives and make you wise; teach them to each other and sing them out in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with thankful hearts."

Christianity is a singing religion. Many of our high moments in worship come as we express our faith through song. My wife and I attended a worship service in Aruba, a service where Dutch and French were spoken. We were not outsiders, however, for much of the service was in song, a language which transcends nationalities.

Paul stresses our need to let Christ enrich our lives or, in the popular vernacular, "turn you on." The title song of the folk musical, "Natural High," sums up his call to sharing what we

have learned and experienced in Christ:

"It's a scientific formula, effectively reduced

To simple terms so everyone can try.

It's a perfectly legal, non-chemically induced, Logically 'natural high.'

Just turn on your mind to wisdom,

Just turn on your heart to love.

Turn on your soul, but natural,

Turn on to God above.

Turn on your eyes to kindness,

Turn on your dreams to give,

Turn on your strength to help someone,

Turn on to God and live."

C. Christian character demonstrated (v. 17).

This verse has been called the "shortest book on morality ever written," for Paul pleads, "Whatever you do or say, let it be as a representative of the Lord Jesus."

Harvard philosopher, Josiah Royce, was once asked how he would define a Christian. Watching the great preacher, Phillips Brooks, walk across campus, he answered, "I don't know, but there goes one." That was his

definition — a walking one in the person of Brooks. Every believer who takes his/her faith seriously, should be a walking demonstration of Christian character and behavior.

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Baptist Record

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